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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007

Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The Peacebuilding Commission

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/60/L.40

Twenty-sixth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee has considered the statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/60/L.40 (A/C.5/60/22). The Committee received the statement at 10 a.m. on 16 December 2005.

2. Under the terms of draft resolution A/60/L.40, the General Assembly would, inter alia, decide, acting concurrently with the Security Council, in accordance with Articles 7, 22, and 29 of the Charter of the United Nations, to establish the Peacebuilding Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body and would reaffirm its request to the Secretary-General that he establish, within the Secretariat, from within existing resources, a small peacebuilding support office staffed by qualified experts to assist and support the Commission.

3. In its report on revised estimates relating to the 2005 World Summit Outcome (A/60/7/Add.13 and Corr.1 and 2), the Advisory Committee had recommended that the General Assembly defer consideration of resource requirements for a small peacebuilding support office until the deliberations on the arrangements for the Peacebuilding Commission had been concluded. The Committee had also indicated that when these deliberations were concluded a statement of programme budget implications should be issued in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

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4. In his statement, the Secretary-General indicated that the programme budget implications would be the same as those contained in his report on revised estimates (A/60/537). In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that the revised estimates had contained a proposal for an additional requirement of 21 posts, as follows:

- *One Assistant Secretary-General*
- *One D-2*
- *One D-1*
- *Three P-5 posts*
- *Five P-4 posts*
- *Five P-3 posts*
- *One General Service (Principal level) and four General Service (Other level) posts*

5. The Advisory Committee recalls that in its previous report it had indicated that no detailed description of the functions of the requested posts had been provided (A/60/7/Add.13 and Corr.1 and 2, para. 35). The Committee had also noted that the Secretary-General had already taken interim steps to set up a start-up element of the office, using posts currently available, so as to ensure that it would be in a position to prepare for the pending establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission.

6. **The Advisory Committee points out that the Secretary-General is maintaining his previous proposal despite the reaffirmed request that a "small peacebuilding support office" be established from "within the existing resources". The Committee recommends that the General Assembly decide that, in view of the requirement that the office be staffed from within the existing resources, there should not be any additional appropriation under section 3, Political affairs, of the proposed programme budget for 2006-2007 at the present stage.**

7. **In making its recommendation, the Advisory Committee is fully cognizant of what it stated in paragraph 67 of its first report on the proposed programme budget for 2000-2001 (A/54/7), in which it expressed the view that it is the responsibility of the Secretariat to inform the General Assembly thoroughly and accurately about whether there are enough resources to implement a new activity. In the case at hand, while the Secretary-General is within his right to inform the Assembly that he believes that additional resources are necessary, it is incumbent upon him to fully justify that position, with a full analysis of the possibilities for absorption and redeployment. In this regard, the Committee has been informed that, in view of the novel functions of the envisaged support office, it is not possible to utilize existing Secretariat capabilities to staff it. The Committee is not convinced by this explanation and points out that there is no evidence of a sufficient attempt to redeploy resources or otherwise accommodate this activity from within existing resources (see A/60/7/Add.13 and Corr.1 and 2, para. 13). In the opinion of the Committee, the Secretary-General should therefore be requested to revisit the matter and to submit a proposal that would be consistent with the intent of the Assembly.**

8. The total estimate under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 is, in the opinion of the Advisory Committee, still fluid and subject to change since the requirements for the Human Rights Council are still undetermined. Under the circumstances, the General Assembly may wish to consider that such additional resources as may be necessary for the Peacebuilding Commission be reported in the performance report; such an option was foreseen in paragraph 29 of the Committee's report on the revised estimates.